

# THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

**SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY**

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**2018**

Thoughts  
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## **AWESOME AFRICA!**

The Word Today is bursting with spiritual life in Africa! On my recent trip there I met with producers of the program in the Turkana, Tumbuka and Somali languages, three of ten which are aired across the continent. I visited South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, and Swaziland. What a joy it was to meet listeners who *cherish* The Word Today! For them it is not just another Christian ministry, but a lifeline of hope, strengthening, assurance, comfort and joy.

I met with refugees from the Kakuma camp in Kenya, and they have a tough time. They love Jesus, but are in a small minority. God is working among them to bring people to faith in Jesus one at a time. In other places pastors are using TWT for training themselves to know the Word better. They take what they have learned and turn it into sermons and Bible study for their congregations.

There are so many more languages to reach! People in remote regions all over the world have not heard the Gospel. They deserve to know the Lord! Please educate your family and friends about The Word Today so that we can grow our team and add languages to the 65 already being broadcast!

## **SHOOTINGS**

As of the date I write this note, February 15<sup>th</sup>, there have been 18 school shootings in the first 45 days of 2018. That is a sobering statistic representative of a culture spiraling out of control. While we obviously need better control over who gets guns, culturally we need *spiritual self-control*, one of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. I have said before that we (as in the republic's public educational system) are breeding killers by the score. A steady diet of Darwinism, Humanism and broken homes will naturally result in instability. I'm surprised that we're not seeing more of it. Given the access with which a 19-year-old can get an AR-15, the mood altering media they consume, and the mind altering substances that cover high schools like waters cover the earth, it's a miracle we don't have this *daily*.

## **MISPLACED VALUES**

I met a young man who grew up in our congregation, but who has fallen away from practicing the faith. He was heading into a Best Buy store to buy a game machine. As we talked he shared how a friend has spent most of his free time playing a video game and is now close to becoming a "grand master" at the game, one of the best in the world. Purportedly soon the friend will begin making money at playing it. I thought, "That guy is handing his life away to a *machine*."

*The Bible is God's Word . . . Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh . . .  
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*



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Tragic, isn't it? We are given one life, one existence on Earth, and because of the fallen sinful nature's pull toward addiction and distraction from healthy spiritual activity such as worship and serving God in our daily life, many are enslaved to worldly habits and activities. The Apostle Peter wrote, "... a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning (2:19b-20)." The media rightly laments the horrific school shootings, but beyond the hundreds of lives taken in such events *millions* of young adults are wasting their lives on meaningless pursuits.

*Know this; there will always be sticky, entangling, enticing, entrapping temptations set before you by Satan and the World to have you snared such that you are useless for the Kingdom. Satan wants you to waste your life in meaningless pursuits, such as over-involvement in sports. God wants better for us! He desires that we not be entrapped by the enticements of this world! We are not to give our lives to machines, be they cars, boats, houses, TVs, computers, phones or game machines, not to mention highly addictive gambling machines! Your life will be enhanced through *flesh and blood relationships*, not devices!*

#### **OVERSIZED TEMPLE**

The year was 572 B.C., and the Jewish captives in Babylon who had been separated from their homeland were thinking they would never return and that their heritage would be wiped from the Earth. God had other plans, and through the prophet Ezekiel he gave measurements for a new temple, as the old one in Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians.

Yet, this temple was never built. A temple was built, led by the team of King Hezekiah and the prophets Ezra and Nehemiah. But the specific temple discussed in Ezekiel 40 was a bit large to build as its outer dimensions were roughly *five miles by seven miles*, far greater than the size of the entire city of Jerusalem at the time! Consider that the ancient temple mount area covered approximately 500 square yards (The People's Bible: Ezekiel, p. 237).

The size of the heavenly model was reminiscent of the Ark of Noah, and speaks to God as having BIG plans for his people! He has no less big plans for those who adhere to discipleship in the name of his Son, Jesus! God intends for us to have resurrection of the body, and to enjoy an eternal fellowship with Him and those who have believed in Christ. Nothing is bigger, nor more important, than that!

#### **PASTOR PAUL AND SYLVIA SCHEDULED TO BE AT 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIV. OF TWT**

As our partner, can you join us for this celebration on May 6<sup>th</sup>? Please notify us at Our Shepherd's office; 414-421-2060 or email [bethb@ourshepherdlutheran.org](mailto:bethb@ourshepherdlutheran.org)

Blessings!  
Douglas W. Schroeder

**THE WORD TODAY** reaching the world with **GOD'S WORD**